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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

ATTENTION : Director of Training  
Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : Training and Personnel Development

1. While the discussion of training at the Director's Annual Conference did not arrive at specific decisions, the groundwork was laid and general approval given for the prosecution of the concepts outlined in your "Profile of Courses" memo distributed to the Deputies. Thus I believe that we have a green light to go ahead to the further refinement of the concepts you outlined therein and which you developed in greater detail in the supporting papers provided to me. I would like to proceed along these lines.

2. We face substantial dilemmas in this process. You outline the importance of such courses as the Midcareer Course but then point out that this course only accommodated 138 officers in FY 1971, at a time when about 295 officers were promoted to GS-14. It is obvious from this that this course, however good, only affects part of our work force and thus does not make the kind of contribution to Agency personnel development that we should hope to achieve. I therefore think our first problem is to review the profile against a realistic estimate of what it can do for the Agency's total personnel complement. You are already endeavoring to focus greater attention on the core courses. Included in this, I believe we must review the possibility of expanding the numbers taking the core courses by reducing some of the other courses in their favor. This requires a general acceptance of the fact that the core courses are actually desirable enough to compensate for the reduction of the other courses. I would appreciate some analysis of this problem viewed from the standpoint of personnel and professional development of the work force of the Agency, rather than of the excellence of the individual courses.

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3. With respect to sanctions, I agree with your point that these not be imposed on individual employees. Statistically, it is clear that this would not only be unfair but unfeasible. At the same time, I would like to see a way in which our reporting mechanism could indicate the degree to which the various offices and directorates are actually utilizing training in terms of personnel development, as it could be that the "sanction" or corrective action could be addressed more to the office than to the individual employee. If steps along this line are to be taken, however, we must be clear that any shortfalls are clearly not ascribable to our training program or establishment. In this respect, for example, I would hope we could come to a situation where we can firmly schedule at least our core courses a year in advance to permit prior planning for participation rather than last-minute quota-filling. We also perhaps need to establish the necessary detailed procedures by which attendance at courses can be considered and scheduled in the context of tour changes, home leaves, etc., requiring the closest liaison between Training, Personnel, and command channels.

4. Assuring that the content of the courses is a real contribution to personnel development is a function of the Board of Visitors being established separately, but the Office of Training is certainly to be commended on its efforts to develop a kind of audit to demonstrate the value of training to individual careers. Similarly, I would hope that the Office of Personnel could develop a clear indication in personnel records of the degree to which an individual's participation in certain training courses strengthened him and improved his qualifications for additional assignments, increased responsibilities, etc. If training is to become this valuable, procedures should be developed by which it can be made the subject of special attention by panels selecting individuals for assignment, promotion, etc.

5. While I agree with your basic point that it is not the Office of Training's function or authority to select which individuals should receive training within a parent directorate, I suspect there are steps we can impose to ensure the selection is a serious procedure. For instance, I would think that the recommendations for participation in certain core courses could require identification of the reasons for

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the assignment of the individual, i.e., to prepare for the increased responsibilities he is certainly going to get, to improve his performance in his current level, to prepare him for new responsibilities not yet within his experience, etc. Similarly, I would hope that the PMMP exercise could include some of the basic elements upon which planning for and auditing of training could be developed, i.e., forecasting the number of personnel to take various courses -- core and otherwise -- at the various grade levels, showing the proportion of waivers of language position requirements, etc.

6. With respect to management training (your separate memo dated 5 May), I certainly agree with your dual approach of including management training within core courses but also providing additional short courses for additional ("skill") needs. With respect to the other points made in your memorandum, I fully concur in the basic thrust you are developing and only would like to see it integrated into the overall training and personnel development concept discussed above.

7. In closing, let me reiterate my great admiration for the effectiveness of our training establishment. I certainly hope my views are not considered critical, as they are only aimed at ensuring that this excellence is targeted at the development of our personnel generally and not merely for the benefit of those who happen to attend the courses. I certainly concur in the basic approach of keeping training as one of support to the directorates by satisfying their demands and being responsive to their needs rather than through any artificial command process requiring quotas, sanctions, etc. At the same time, I think we can generate pressures for betterment by a systematic collection of the facts, showing the way in which we use the training asset, its contribution to the improvement of our activities and personnel generally, and the degree to which different offices show variances from what might be expected of them.

8. Let us proceed with further development of this subject in the context of the Board of Visitors' review of training and of the PMMP review of our total personnel situation. Out of these, and the work leading up to them, I would hope we will continually perfect Training's contribution to our operational performance.

  
W. E. Colby

Executive Director - Comptroller

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cc: DTR

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